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ABSTRACT

Most current writing about American public education describes it in terms of a crisis situation. However, schools often serve as scapegoats for the failure of other institutions and for social ills that they had no part in creating. This book presents a collection of essays and commentaries on recent proposals for educational reform and actions taken by government to establish national standards. Part 1 contains the introductory chapter by Robert Orrill, entitled "Titanic Structure or Human Scale: School Reform at the Close of the Twentieth Century." Part 2 contains a single chapter that provides a historical overview of curriculum and national standards in the United States. In "Curriculum Ferment in the 1890s," Herbert M. Kliebard shows that the American school-reform experience has been characterized by continuing struggle, rather than consensus. Part 3, which offers perspectives on national standards, includes the following chapters: (3) "Implications of Subject-Matter Standards" (Christopher T. Cross); (4) "The Politics of National Standards" (Tom Loveless); (5) "The Threat to Freedom in Goals 2000" (Stephen Arons); (6) "Developing World-Class Education Standards: Some Conceptual and Political Dilemmas" (J. Myron Atkin); and (7) "Curriculum and Assessment Standards: Common Measures or Conversations?" (Dennie Palmer Wolf). The fourth part, which examines issues around standards and educational policy, contains the following chapters: (8) "Policy and Practice: The Relations Between Governance and Instruction" (David K. Cohen and James P. Spillane); and (9) "Goals 2000 and a Reauthorized ESEA: National Standards and Accompanying Controversies" (Michael W. Kirst and James W. Guthrie). Part 5 is comprised of: (10) "Teachers' Professional Development: Critical Colleagueship and the Role of Professional Communities" (Brian Lord); and (11) "Teachers Regulating Themselves: Teachers Owning Their Standards" (Philip A. Cusik). Part 6 includes: (12) "National Curriculum Content Standards: The Challenges for Subject Matter Associations" (Diane Massell); and (13) "Problems and Issues

Facing the National Standards Project in English" (Miles Myers). An index and chapter references are included. (LMI)

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